

FDA Commissioner
Dockets Management Branch (HFA 305)
Food and Drug Administration
5630 Fisher's Lane, rm. 1061
Rockville, MD 20852

0330 '01 MAR 13 P1:47

RE: Docket No. 00D-1598


Gentlemen:

Mandatory labeling was the primary message heard from the FDA public hearings on genetic engineering in 1999, and in the FDA's own consumer focus groups in May 2000. The recent final report of the joint EU-U.S. Biotechnology Consultative Forum also emphasized the importance of mandatory labeling of genetically modified food products. FDA apparently rejected the whole thing, giving industry the freedom to do as they please with our food, and with our lives and our health. This is contrary to what the FDA is for, to protect people from unsafe experiments with our food (yes, it is not safe until PROVEN safe, over many years, corporations' insistence that "there's no danger to anyone" notwithstanding).

The proposed guidance on labeling is unacceptable. That the FDA continues to deny mandatory labeling of genetically modified foods is contrary to what the Agency has consistently heard from the majority of consumers, and seems to show a bias toward benefiting corporations rather than the end consumers of the food; probably not surprising since corporations are apparently driving the decisions of the FDA or are on its boards and thus vote for themselves and their bottom line, figuring the rabble out here will just have to eat it if they are hungry, who cares.

In addition, the FDA's decision to encourage voluntary labeling instead of mandatory labeling unfairly puts the burden on manufacturers who choose not to use bio-engineered ingredients instead of on those who are introducing this new technology into our food supply, again showing a bias in favor of the corporations who would rather use us, the consumers, as guinea-pigs for their testing, without our knowledge, and seemingly without caring one bit about our fate should we ingest modified products which cause allergic reactions, illness or even death.

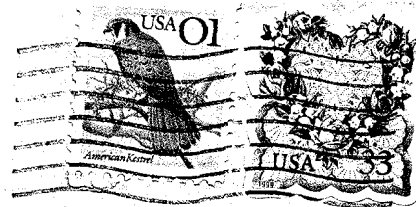
Mandatory labeling of foods that contain genetically modified ingredients is essential. Consumers deserve the right of informed choice in the selection of food for themselves and their families, even if corporations do not believe that to be of any relevance whatsoever, if it means making money off us. Please do your job and protect US, not the corporations' profit margins.


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